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## Conservation Element

Adopted June 21, 1999

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

According to Government Code Section 65302(d), the Conservation Element must consider:

"...the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources."

As a small community dependent on agricultural activities for its economic base, Gridley is very concerned about maintaining the quantity and quality of natural resources necessary to support those activities. That concern was expressed in the joint Conservation - Open Space Element adopted by the City in 1974 and amended in 1980. The 1998 revision is intended to reflect the community's current thinking on resource issues, and to expand and refine the policy statements in other portions of the General Plan.

A General Plan Support Document has been prepared as background information for this Conservation Element. The Support Document includes general background information for conservation and other General Plan policies, as well as specific background information for establishment of the City's Sphere of Influence, growth rate assumptions and projections, and anticipated phasing.

### **B. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Conservation Element focuses on the management and use of economically productive natural resources. As such, it addresses much of the subject matter of both the Land Use and Open Space Elements. Since General Plans must be internally consistent, the Conservation Element has been developed to support and complement the policies



stated in both of those elements.

The Land Use Element affects resource conservation policies in several ways. The projected amount and location of land needed for future urban growth indicates the areas to be removed from agricultural use, suggests the timing of such conversion, and shows the type of development which will replace or adjoin agricultural uses. The Land Use Element also contains general policies on urban development, rural uses and agricultural production which provide a starting point for policy analysis in the Conservation Element.

Although all resource-related land uses addressed in the Conservation Element are also required subjects of the Open Space Element, the law mandates different approaches for each Element. The Conservation Element focuses on the management of valuable physical materials while the Open Space Element must consider the preservation of all land areas devoted to the use of such resources.

## **II. POLICY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **A. AGRICULTURAL SOILS**

#### **Goal:**

Maximize agricultural use and production on prime agricultural soils in the Gridley area.

#### **Policies**

1. Minimize the amount of prime soils used for future urban development, while recognizing that any growth and expansion in the area surrounding Gridley must necessarily occur on prime soils.
  - A. Designate sufficient land for urban development to accommodate a long-term annual minimum growth rate of 1.5 to 2 percent.
  - B. Allow maximum densities of urban development which are consistent with other City policies.



- C. Adopt zoning which meets urban growth needs, which also allows production agricultural uses to continue until such time as development occurs.
- D. Permit agricultural activities in all City zones with standards to ensure compatibility with other areas.

## **B. WATER RESOURCES**

### **Goal**

Maintain quantity and quality of water resources adequate for all uses in the Gridley area.

### **Policies**

- 1. Maintain adequate capacity for planned future flows in the City's sewage collection and treatment system.
- 2. Expand the pumping and storage capacity of the City's water system to maintain adequate flows and pressure for fire suppression and all expected uses.

## **C. AIR QUALITY**

### **Goal**

Maintain air quality meeting accepted standards for maximum concentrations of pollutants.

### **Policies**

- 1. Support Butte County Air Quality Management District standards for controlling emissions from vehicles, space heating, industry, agriculture and other sources.
- 2. Designate a future land use and circulation pattern for the community which minimizes total mileage required for vehicle trips.
- 3. Design local streets, traffic controls and parking areas to minimize stopping and idling.
- 4. Encourage public transit systems where feasible.